

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 OMB-01 DRC-01 /093 W

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R 011550Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0027

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 2996

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AF, IN

SUBJ: INDO-AFGHAN RELATIONS: NAIM VISIT

REF: KABUL 1221

1. MEA JOINT SECRETARY (WEST ASIA AND NORTH AFRICA) ALEXANDER TOLD POL COUNSELOR MARCH 1 VIRTUALLY NOTHING ABOUT NAIM VISIT. HE INSISTED THAT LITTLE HAD TAKEN PLACE DURING NAIM AND WAHID ABDULLAH MEETINGS OTHER THAN TOUR D'HORIZON OF INDO-AFGHAN RELATIONS AND GENERAL SITUATION IN THE AREA. AFGHANS APPEARED PRIMARILY INTEERESTED IN PSYCHOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL REASSURANCE OF INDIAN SYMPATHY. AFGHANS HAD NEVER MENTIONED INTEREST IN MILITARY ASSURANCES FROM GOI, BUT ALEXANDER VOLUNTEERED HE THOUGHT AFGHANS WOULD PROBABLY BE GLAD TO HAVE THESE.

2. ON PAKISTAN, NAIM CONVINCED THAT SITUATION IN THE NORTHWEST WAS DETERIORATING AND WOULD CONTINUE TO GET WORSE BUT DID NOT INDICATE WHAT AFGHANS WOULD DO ABOUT IT. ON AFGHAN POLICY TOWARD PUKHTOONS, NAIM USED ONLY THE OLD FORMULA THAT
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PEOPLE OF THE AREA SHOULD DECIDE THEIR OWN FUTURE. ALEXANDER

COMMENTED THAT INDIANS WERE NOWHERE AS SURE THAT THE SITUATION IN NORTHWEST PAKISTAN WAS WORSENING AS THE AFGHANS PROFESSED TO BE. ALEXANDER SAID THAT TRANSSHIPMENT AND OVER-FLIGHT RESTRICTIONS OVER PAKISTAN POSED A SERIOUS PROBLEM FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDO-AFGHAN ECONOMIC RELATIONS. INDIA WOULD PROBABLY RAISE THESE WITH THE PAKS FAIRLY SOON. THE BANDAR ABBAS-KANDAHAR ROAD WOULD EVENTUALLY SOLVE SOME OF THE TRANSPORT PROBLEMS IN ANY EVENT.

3. WAHID ABDULLAH TOLD THE INDIANS HIS RECENT TRIP TO TEHRAN HAD GONE EXTREMELY WELL AND NAIM WOULD HIMSELF SHORTLY BE VISITING IRAN. THE IRANIANS HAD BEEN MOST FRIENDLY AND UNDERSTANDING. ON HELMAND VALLEY QUESTION, IRANIANS HAD BEEN RELAXED AND AGREED TO HANDLE AFGHAN DELAY IN SIGNING THE TREATY AS RELATING TO TECHNICAL RATHER THAN POLITICAL PROBLEMS. AFGHANS DID NOT HOWEVER, INDICATE WHEN THEY WOULD SIGN.

4. ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION, ALEXANDER SHRUGGED OFF THE NAIM TRIP AS NOT ADVANCING MATTERS AND SAID DECISIONS WOULD BE MADE WHEN THE INDO-AFGHAN ECONOMIC COMMISSION MET LATE IN MARCH.

5. COMMENT: IF ALL THIS SOUNDS THIN, THAT'S THE WAY THE CONVERSATION WENT. WE DON'T EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY THAT MORE WENT ON. WE'LL LOOK FORWARD TO KABUL'S REPORTING. THE INDIANS SEEM PLEASED TO HAVE THE SPATE OF INDO-AFGHAN VISITS BACK AND FORTH BUT PERHAPS NOT TOO CLEAR ON WHERE IT IS ALL GOING--OR WHETHER THE LEVEL AT WHICH THE EXCHANGES ARE TAKING PLACE ARE WARRANTED. THEY INSIST THEY FIND THE DAUD GOVERNMENT NOT MUCH DIFFERENT TO DEAL WITH THAN THE KING'S. WE WONDER WHETHER THE INDIANS ARE SOMEWHAT WARY OF BECOMING TOO ACTIVELY AND CONSPICUOUSLY ENGAGED IN DAUD'S INTRICATE GAME WITH PAKISTAN.
MOYNIHAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, MINISTERIAL VISITS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974NEWDE02996
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740375/aaaacrjn.tel
Line Count: 94
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: KABUL 1221
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13-Aug-2002 by worrelsw>; APPROVED <09 JAN 2003 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INDO-AFGHAN RELATIONS: NAIM VISIT
TAGS: PFOR, AF, IN, (NAIM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005